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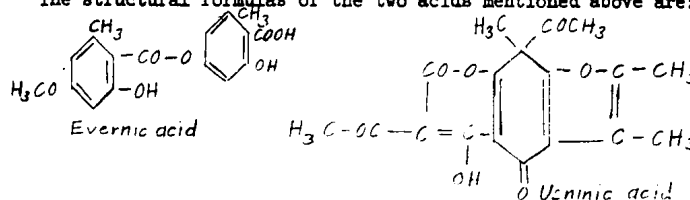
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SOURCE   Pharmazeutische Zentralhalle fuer Deutschland, Vol 88, No 6, 1949.

ANTIBIOTICS FROM LICHENS

J. K. Klosa

Of 25 lichen extracts investigated for their bactericidal qualities, 21 were found to be highly effective. Evernic acid, in a 1:1,000,000 dilution, inhibited the growth of streptococci, staphylococci, and tuberculosis bacteria. Another acid, usninic acid, had the same effect in the same dilution. A fraction of the lichen substances, containing still other unknown compounds in addition to the two above ones, called "Evosin," inhibits the growth of tuberculosis bacteria in a dilution of 1:2,000,000. In a dilution of 1:10,000 it prevents mold formation.

The structural formulas of the two acids mentioned above are:

Evernic acid

O Usninic acid

The differences in structure between the lichen substances and the antitubercular salicylic acid derivatives are only slight, but the lichen acids also have a slight tanning effect. It is possible that this tanning action affects the protecting cover of the tuberculosis bacteria, making them more susceptible to the antibiotic effects of the Evosin.

Evosin is also effective against infectious skin diseases caused by streptococci and staphylococci, and against fungus diseases. The therapeutic effect of Evosin in tuberculosis cases must still be evaluated on the basis of large-scale practical tests. It resembles clitocybine in its characteristics. The substance is not harmful. So far no secondary effects have been noted.

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